



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**City of Duluth Police Department**

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**DATE: 03/19/2010**

**NATURE OF INCIDENT: Vehicle Prowls**

**CASE NO.:**

**INCIDENT DATE :03/18/2010**

**INCIDENT TIME:**

**INCIDENT LOCATION: Duluth**

**SUBJECT: Prevention Tips after Police see increase in Vehicle Prowls**

**BY: Officer Brad Wick, Information Coordinator**

With the recent warm weather, Duluth Police have seen an increase in vehicle prowls. Police want remind citizens to lock their vehicles, remove valuables, and report any suspicious activity to 9-1-1.

Car prowls are crimes of opportunity. A car prowler makes a split second decision to break into a vehicle based on the perception there are valuables in the vehicle and making it worth the risk. A car prowler can be completed in a minute or less, with most (not all) occurring between the hours of 10:00 pm to 5:00 am. Vehicles are usually entered through an unlocked door or by breaking a window.

#### **Car Prowl Prevention**

Car (or vehicle) prowls are one of the easiest crimes to reduce with increased awareness. The following preventive measures will reduce the chances of being the target of a car prowler:

- Keep the interior of your car clean. Never leave valuables, including bags, purses, wallets, briefcases, laptops, cell phones, loose change or anything that may appear valuable in plain view.
- Don't store or leave credit cards, identification or personal information in your glove box or anywhere in your car. Remove garage door openers, key cards, and house or work keys from the car so a car prowler cannot gain access to your home.
- If you have to leave valuables in your car, put them in the trunk before you get to your destination.
- Before leaving your parked car, always remove the keys, roll up the windows, lock the car and set the alarm (if you have one). Keep your keys with you.
- If possible, store your car in a closed and locked garage. If your car is stored in a carport or parked near your house, leave an outside light on. Consider replacing the light fixture closest to your car with a motion detector unit. Motion detectors are good psychological deterrents, causing the car prowler to think that someone has seen them when the light comes on. Also lights make the car prowler more visible.
- Create visibility. If you park on the street, choose a well-lit, open space even if it means adding additional street or yard lighting. Trim back trees or bushes that block your view of your vehicle.
- Park in busy, well lit areas. Avoid parking near anything that limits visibility like dumpsters, large vans or trucks, or wooded areas.
- Report any suspicious activity to the police. **One of the most important things you can do is to report all suspicious activity to 9-1-1 and encourage your neighbors to do the same.**

If your car is broken into or you there is a car prowler in progress, call 9-1-1. With your help, vehicle prowls will go down and police have a better chance of catching those responsible.